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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER REPEATER

July 2008

Message from the President

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

This is a first for us. I don't ever remember doing a July newsletter and preparing for a July club meeting. You may remember we voted and decided to hold meetings this summer in the name of camaraderie and consistency. I'm pretty sure food was involved somehow, maybe a barbeque out back of the fire house or something like that. I have not heard from anyone about that part of it so that's sort of up in the air as of Sunday evening.

We had some interesting plans for Field Day 2008 in June that went down the toilet at the last minute due to the poor air quality in the Vacaville area. My wife Cora and I went out to Larry and Sue Hogue's place to discuss Field Day on Thursday evening. Perfect timing I might add. Sue was just getting ready to cut into a chocolate bunt cake with strawberries and cool whip on the side. Man! Timing is so important in life.

Anyway, we looked around, discuss the resources available and the scheduling. By the time I got home I had decided to ditch the outdoor site in favor of using my house for Field Day were we could be in doors away from the smoke.

We ran a 1E station which is a home station using emergency power. I used my Kipor TG1000 generator that fired right up with no difficulty. I put it outside, ran an extension cord down the chimney and over to my work station. I did this because I wanted to run the AC and keep the windows and doors closed. It worked beautifully!

Thanks to Clyde WH6AB, Bob K6HEW, Tom N6AJR, and Doug KI6MWR for stopping by to operate and discuss amateur radio with me.

We worked about 200 stations both SSB and CW over the weekend. Tom and I worked an station being operated by an eight year old girl in Utah that was kind of fun. She didn't know the lingo so we just used normal kid conversation to make the contact. We told her she was doing a great job.

Let's hope next year we can get back outside where Field Day is suppose to be.

I submitted our club log via email to the ARRL already so we're done for FD 2008!

What's interesting to you this summer? We have a couple of bonus meeting to work with. Is a demonstration of some sort something you'd like to see or do? What part of amateur radio do you want to see or do?

I have a minor antenna project here at my house to complete. I just bought a GAP Titan DX 80 thru 10 vertical antenna that needs to be assembled and tested. Last summer I had a nice antenna team come over a couple of times to work on an old Cushcraft R7 vertical antenna. That was fun. We even had my beer distributor neighbor down the street bring over a mini-keg of Coors Light Beer so we could stay refreshed while working.

Not much new on the repeater repair. I've communicated with Skipp WV6F who acknowledged my offer of assistance and resources. Unless I hear differently, I would expect the current performance of the repeater to be the same until further notice. There is nothing more I can do.

On the HF side of amateur radio the bands are still pretty weak. I worked a special event station in South Korea this morning on 2Øm CW which was a nice surprise. D8TG was the call sign. I also worked MDØCCE on The Isle of Man on 2Øm SSB Saturday afternoon.

There are small openings into Europe if you look for them and you happened to be around at the right time.

There is a DXpedition coming up on Christmas Island VK9X in a couple of weeks. That one shouldn't be too difficult to work. Their website http://www.dxciting.com/vk9x/ is full of details about the trip. This is an IO location, so it will be real DX!

Once the operation is running you are invited to come over here and work them if you'd like. I'm sure that would be fun and a nice QSL card for the wall is always good.

See you Wednesday evening! 73! Jerry KD6WKY

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Vaca Valley Radio Club Meeting Notes of Wed. 18 June. 2ØØ8

The Vaca Valley Radio Club - 2ØØ8 Round Table Pizza party kicked off at 18ØØ hr. with folks queuing up to order their favorite pizza, salad, and drinks. In attendance were many of the regular members, along with their families, friends, and a number of visitors.

Later in the evening, our President, Jerry Olive (KD6WKY), called the formal portion of the meeting to order at 191Ø hr., to briefly cover a couple of club matters, and he began with a roll call of all the members with their call signs.

There was a motion to accept the secretary's notes as published in the news letter. The motion was seconded/approved.

There was no finance report given.

OLD BUSINESS:
Jerry mentioned that he was trying to connect with Diane –wife of Roy Phelps (K6ZU – SK) to help with his equipment. More information is to follow.

NEW BUSINESS:
Field Day 'Ø8 is on at Larry & Sue Hogue's QTH off Midway Rd. in North Vacaville. The plan is to set up at Ø9ØØ hr. on Sat. 6-28, and be on the air by 11ØØ hr.

The membership was reminded that we are going to continue meeting through the Summer instead of taking a Summer break this year, and the next regular meeting will be at the Vine St. fire station on July 9th.

(**Reminder**: When the proposal to continue meeting through the Summer was brought to the membership for a vote it was suggested that "*someone*" might coordinate a pot-luck, or Bar-B-Q on those Summer meeting nights. So, with the next meeting on July 9th. – is there a "*someone*" willing to make some calls to coordinate who's going to bring what? Remember, it doesn't have to be difficult – a bucket of the Colonel's finest, some chips, weenies or burgers or ??…. Call Skip, (448-744Ø), or Bob (448-5665) for an emailed roster to work from.)

And in the final official business of the night, Dean (WA6NBU) won the drawing. Congrats Dean!

So, just as quickly as it started – it was over. The business part of the evening was adjourned at 192Øhr.

(Ahh… good pizza, good friends, and only 10 min. of talk – now THAT's the way to conduct a meeting!)

Respectfully submitted: "Skip" Lawson AF6HC

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2008
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Vice President: Mike Vieira, W6MAV
Secretary: Skip Larson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Mike Carney, N6SEE
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman, KE6MDM
Director: Clyde Hood, WH6AB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Activities Chairperson: Clyde Hood, WH6AB
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

NARCC President Retires

Riley Hollingsworth is retiring July 3. Larry Hogue W6OMF communicated with me about this.

If you have any kind of repeater coordination problems, send an email to fccham@fcc.gov and it will be acted on by his replacement. Also see http://www.narc.org/

Best Pizza Party Photo for 2008!

Here is a nice photo of Maria KC4PGH, Jorge KK4XU, Clyde WH6AB, and our favorite club meeting visitor Loren who always manages to walk away with a new two dollar bill!

We had a great turnout at our 2nd annual June Pizza Party Club meeting. We'll do it again in 2009!

Nice work everyone!

ARRL Tells Red Cross of Remaining Background Check Policy Concerns

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, has written to Armond T. Mascelli, Vice President for Domestic Disaster response for the American Red Cross (ARC) to identify the ARRL's remaining concerns over the background check policy for ARC partners. Harrison emphasized that the commencement of negotiation of a replacement *Statement of Understanding* (*SOU*) between the two organizations should not be further delayed while these concerns are resolved and that he looked forward to signing a new *SOU* once additional edits to the background check Disclosure Form and clarifications of the background check Authorization Form are in place for those radio amateurs who volunteer their service to the Red Cross.

Harrison first wrote to Mascelli on November 28, 2007, setting out the ARRL's concerns with the background check procedures recently implemented by the ARC. ARC now requires a background check for Amateur Radio volunteers seeking to support a Red Cross disaster relief response for more than a seven day period. In the ARRL's view, Amateur Radio volunteers were being asked to consent to a more intrusive background check than was necessary or appropriate.

Editor's Note—The article goes on to dicusss the concerns regarding delays in volunteer availability if the back ground checks are buried in bureaucracy.

US Government Recalls RadioShack Power Supplies (Jul 3, 2008)

On July 2, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in cooperation with RadioShack, announced a voluntary recall of 13.8 V dc power supplies. The CPSC said that consumers should stop using these power supplies immediately, as the "power supplies are wired incorrectly, posing electrocution and fire hazards." No injuries have been reported in conjunction with the power supplies that were sold in RadioShack stores nationwide from October 2004-January 2008 for between $50 and $85. Manufactured in China, the CPSC said that the recall involves RadioShack 13.8 V DC Power Supplies, catalog numbers 22-507 and 22-508 with date codes from 08A04 through 01A08. Date code format is MMAYY where MM is the month and YY is the year. The catalog number and date code are located on the back of the power supply. Power supplies with a green dot on the product and the product's packaging have already been repaired and are not included in the recall. The CPSC recommends for consumers to unplug the recalled power supply immediately and take it to any RadioShack store for a free repair. Registered owners of the recalled power supplies will be mailed a notice. For additional information, contact RadioShack at 800-843-7422 anytime, or visit their Web site.

Philadelphia Area Hams Nail Rogue Radio Signals

When residents of a Philadelphia suburb complained to an area television station about how their remote car door entry devices wouldn't work in the parking lot of a local department store, an investigative reporter for NBC-10 (WCAU) called everyone she could to help her discover why. No one knew anything -- until she called on some local ham radio operators.

"Many people lock and unlock a car by remote and don't even give it a second thought unless it doesn't work," said NBC10 reporter Lu Ann Cahn. "The mystery problem repeatedly occurs outside the Kohl's store in Royersford. When I went into Kohl's [to ask about this], they told me they had no idea [about this]."

Cahn said that shoppers told her that this has been going on for more than a year, and that some shoppers don't realize they might have to manually lock their doors: "One woman reported her laptop was stolen from her car after she thought she had locked it."

Shoppers theorized that it was the local power plant causing the interference, but Cahn said that officials at the plant said it wasn't them. Others thought that cellular telephone towers might be the culprit, but there are no cell towers in the area. "Police tell us that they can't figure it out either," Cahn said.

So after calling numerous places to help her out with this mystery, Cahn happened upon Reggie Leister, N3KAS, and Bob Rex, K3DBD, of the Pottstown Area Amateur Radio Club (PAARC); Rex is Vice President of the club and Leister is the club's Public Information Officer (PIO). And as hams do, they were quick to volunteer to help out.

Leister and Rex accompanied Cahn to the parking lot in question. Rex built an antenna out of aluminum tubing and hooked it up to a spectrum analyzer. "Somewhere in the vicinity of this parking lot," Leister said, "there is a big source of radiation, some sort of signal." When Leister aimed the antenna in the direction of the Kohl's store, he hit pay dirt. "There are actually two signals there. It looks like [they're] coming from the building," Rex said when he read the analyzer.

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

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Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+) WV6F 1291.900(-)

Leister and Rex moved in closer to the building and pinpointed that one signal was coming from one set of doors, while the other signal emitted from another set of doors. Rex, an engineer, said that the thing that bothers him about this is that the signals "are running constantly." When Cahn approached Kohl's management with their findings, she was told that "they will look into it."

"The FCC licenses radio signals and these ham radio operators say the fact that some signal is interfering with remote locks isn't good," Cahn said in her report. Rex concurred, saying, "The FCC rules are pretty clear on that. It might be something that's broken." Leister and Rex agreed that the store security sensors located at each set of doors might be the culprit.

Three days after Leister and Rex located the source of the interference, remote car door lockers worked again. "Kohl's will only say that they're working on it," Cahn said. "The FCC says it does sound like something malfunctioned and they have had reports of similar incidents in New York City and Tampa, Florida."

A few days after they found the signals, Leister explained that he and Rex did not think the anti-shoplifting detectors were the problem: "What we are guessing here is that they are probably connected to some kind of device that triggers a security camera to come on if there is a breach. Except instead of just sending out a quick 2-5 second (Part 15) blip, these seem to be on continuously *and* exceeding the permissible signal levels."

Cahn was quick to give credit to the local hams who stepped up to the plate and helped crack this mystery: "We here at NBC10 were so curious as to why these remote car locks would just stop working, so we thought we should really try to solve this mystery. I have to give kudos to Reggie Leister and Bob Rex with the Pottstown Area Amateur Radio Club. They were so great and so excited. You don't know how many people we called -- police, Triple A, car dealerships -- we called so many people trying to figure this out and nobody knew anything until we talked to these ham radio operators. They were so wonderful and they knew all about radio signals. They created their own gadgets to help us figure this out. We really want to thank them for their help with this."

Cell phone Jammers

A phone jammer transmits low power radio signals to cut off communications between cell phones and cell base stations. It does not interfere with any communications other than cellular phones within the defined regulated zone.
Upon activating a phone jammer, all idle phones will indicate "NO NETWORK." Incoming calls are blocked as if the cellular hand phone were off.
When the phone jammer is turned off, all cell hand phones will automatically re-establish communications and provide full service.

Editor's Note—Illegal in the US. Too bad:(

A Summer of E-Skip

Tired of the lousy conditions on the HF bands? Come join the crowd on the "Magic Band." Each summer regardless of where the sunspot cycle is, sporadic E -- or E-skip -- blooms on 6 meters and sometime even on the bands above that. What often appears to be a dead band jumps to life with signals -- some relatively close, only hundreds of miles away -- but some representing worldwide DX on 6 meters.

Skipping Around on 6 Meters

This year is no different. After a slow start, the 6 meter band came into its own in May and has been open in some direction from almost every location in the US almost every day. Sporadic E peaks around the summer solstice, on or around June 21, with a minor peak around the winter solstice, on or around December 21.

Each summer season has unique characteristics that are not predictable, but make the band so fascinating to follow. This year, the emphasis has been on paths to the west and northwest, extending much further east and south than normal. According to VHF expert and conductor of *QST*'s "World Above 50 MHz" column Gene Zimmerman, W3ZZ, there have been several strong openings from Hawaii to the mainland that have included many areas other than the West Coast. Stations in the Mid-Atlantic, the Southeast and the Midwest have had good shots at KH6 in both May and June.

Zimmerman said that summer has brought a nice surprise: "The highlight of this season has been repeated openings to Japan that have mostly bypassed the West Coast and settled in the Southwest, the Southeast (especially Florida) and the Midwest; Japanese stations have even been heard, but not worked, on the East Coast. The latter is a very rare occurrence indeed."

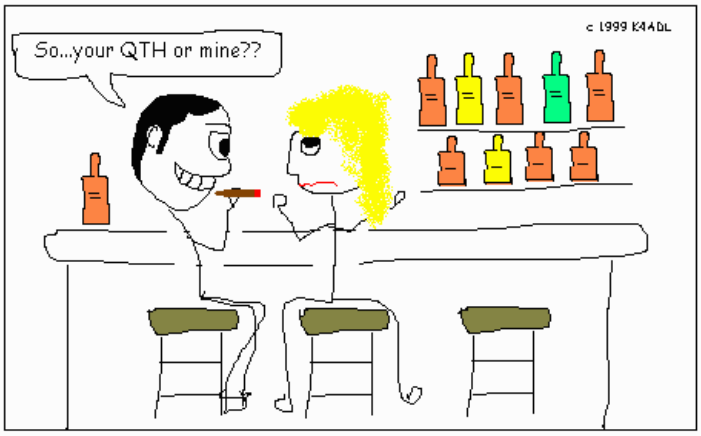
Calling conditions to the Caribbean "outstanding," Zimmerman said that stations in that part of the world have been working the US and Canada, as well as many stations in Europe. "Ted Jimenez, HI3TEJ, in the Dominican Republic has even worked Japan, a tough path even on 10 meters. Inside the US, stations up to 1500 miles away have been easy to get, and there have been lots of openings where the West Coast and the Pacific Northwest worked the East Coast and the Southeast."

2 Meters is Hopping (or Skipping), Too!

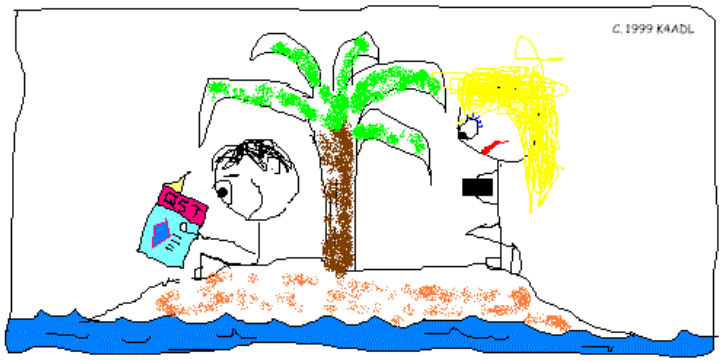
Six meter operators should be alert for very short E-skip that indicates a rare increase in the maximum usable frequency (MUF) to a point where 2 meter E-skip -- or very, very rarely 222 MHz E-skip -- is possible. Zimmerman said there have been several 2 meter sporadic E openings and one 222 MHz E-skip opening this summer: "On May 29-30, 2 meter contacts were reported from Maine to Ohio, south to the Mid-Atlantic, to the Northeast, to South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana in the south and Michigan, Western Tennessee and Southern Illinois to the West. The longest was 1477 miles from Maine (David Olean, K1WHS) to Louisiana (William Kemp,

After small 2 meter E-skip openings on June 3-4 from the Northeast to the Midwest, Zimmerman said the bands blew wide open during the ARRL VHF QSO Party on June 15 with a report of two 222 MHz contacts: John Butrovich, W5UWB (EL17), of Orange Grove, Texas, to Vince Pavkovich, N0VZJ (EN35), of Big Lake, Minnesota; and Paul Trotter, AA4ZZ (EM96), of Charlotte, North Carolina, to David Rush, W5DDR (EM84), McAlister, New Mexico. "This extremely rare event has happened less than half a dozen times in the last 60 years," Zimmerman said. "Two meter E skip was everywhere: Texas; all over the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic; New Mexico to West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee; Colorado to Florida, West Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas; Idaho, Oregon and Washington to the Midwest; Wyoming to Illinois, and Nevada to Iowa, North Dakota and Minnesota."

Zimmerman said that conditions are likely to continue to be very good until the middle of July when the E-skip traditionally begins to wind down. "Most areas of the country have not had good conditions to Europe, so that may still be something to look forward to," he said. "Two DXpeditions to rare Caribbean countries are coming up later in June -- to San Andres (HK0) and to St Barts (FJ). If you have an HF/VHF radio that covers 6 meters, put up a dipole or try your 80 meter antenna -- it should work on 6 meters as well -- and have some fun. You never know what you may work next."



WHY HAROLD RARELY GETS LUCKY AT THE SINGLES BAR



MAROONED WITH HIS NEW BRIDE AND THE LATEST ISSUE OF "QST," WALTER SETTLES IN FOR THE LONG WAIT TO BE RESCUED.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely

Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues ----------$15.00 _____
Each Family Member ---$ 2.00 _____
Student ----------$ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation--- _____
Call/Name badge ---------$10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues----------$39.00 _____
ARRL dues (Senior) -----$36.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143